

511 Rideshare Partnerships Strategy

Fall 2015

Goal

MTC wants to support the adoption and use of mobile carpool applications to increase regional carpooling and eliminate the need to have a 511 Ridematching System (RMS). The 511 Ridematch system would be phased out once private sector apps prove to be a viable alternative. A proposed framework for this decision-making process is provided at the end of this document.

Strategy

- **Phase 0 - Kick-Off Activities** – In October 2015, we will develop strategies and protocols for the partnerships, collect necessary documents/information from the partners.
- **Phase 1 – Build Awareness:** Between October 2015 and December 2016, we will focus on incorporating the partners into our ongoing processes, including website updates, placement calls, e-blasts, social media, and events. We will hold trainings and demonstrations for 511 Rideshare staff.
- **Phase 2 – Develop Technology:** During 2016, we will develop, design, and implement technological changes intended to improve services to commuters. Customers will be given more seamless opportunities to transfer to the private sector (e.g., “opt in,” partner feeds in RMS, and “Carpool Well”), and we will improve usability of the trip diary. All Phase 1 activities will continue.

Note: *This strategy includes activities that go beyond Parsons Brinckerhoff’s contract. The intent is for the Parsons Brinckerhoff team to implement this strategy through June 30, 2016 (contract end date) and then MTC can determine if and how the strategy is continued as part of the new contract.*

Approach

Phase 0 - Kick-Off Activities – In October 2015, we will conduct demonstrations of private sector at MTC, develop strategies and protocols for the partnerships, and collect necessary documents/information from the partners.

[illegible]

[illegible]

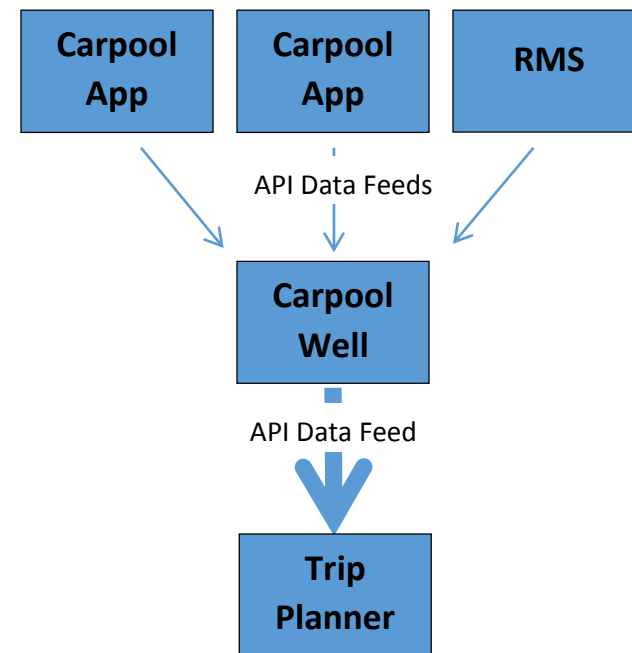
Phase 1 – Build Awareness: Between October 2015 and March 2016, we will focus on all low-hanging fruit (website updates, e-blasts, social media, placement calls, etc). We'll also be prepping for the next phase's activities.

[illegible]

		Pre-Partnership			Month of Partnership							
Activity/Sub-Activity		Responsible Party	Oct	Nov	Dec	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Events and Canvassing												
	Edit procedures/checklists, reports, and evaluation metrics to include Partners	Jumana/ Kathryn/ Helise										
	Develop/identify materials to provide at events (and for canvassing) - as takeaways to encourage people to sign up - maybe sign up on site (with an ipad)	Jumana/ Rachel/ Kathryn										
	Determine how to include partners in events. Coordinate with partners on which events they are attending; on-site coordination if both 511RS and Partners are attending.	Jumana/ Kathryn										
Delegated County Partners and other stakeholders (such as TMAs, business improvement districts, business parks, etc.)												
	Update County Partners on App Partner strategy and how it will affect 511 Rideshare, including future improvements to RMS.	Jumana										
	Provide materials for County Partners and other stakeholders to provide to employers or include on their web pages, where applicable. (such as operational changes and event materials)	Jumana										
Marketing and Incentives												
Email and Social Media Marketing												
	Develop bi-monthly e-blast schedule and messaging	Jumana/ Rachel										
	Develop social media plan and messaging, identify if there are other social media platforms that may make sense to use.	Jumana/ Rachel										
	Identify ways to include Partners in low-tech gamification (and rewards/incentives that go along with it), or include in messaging on emails.	Rachel/ Jumana										

Phase 2 – Develop and Implement Technology Improvements: During 2016¹, technological improvements will be developed that will transform 511 Rideshare from a static database to one that meets the varied ridesharing needs of travelers in the Bay Area. All Phase 1 activities will continue.

A “Carpool Well” solution will be investigated. It would be independent of the RMS, so the RMS would be one of the inputs just like the partner Apps. This allows a decision in the future to maintain the RMS in whole or in part, or shut it down, without affecting the overall functioning of Carpool Well. Additionally, we will explore the possibility for Carpool Well to include its own API so other web or app developers can use the data aggregation services in their own Apps, thereby increasing functionality of the aggregation service. We will seek to coordinate with stakeholders that could potentially use Carpool Well data to ensure it is useful. This is shown in the diagram on the right.



		2015			2016					
Activity/Sub-Activity	Responsible Party	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June
Develop and implement technological improvements: Website, App, Carpool Well, Trip Diary and Gamification, RMS.										
Review peer agency sites (SACOG, etc) for capabilities and user interface; and coordinate with Nisar Ahmed re: GTFS-SUM.	Jumana									
Identify technology needs and priorities	Jumana/ Jon/ Partners									

¹ Note: As of December 2015 Plans for Carpool Well have been delayed while the Rocky Mountain Institute and Tri-Met (and possibly other industry groups) develop a ridesharing data feed standard. Our team will continue to follow any new developments to see if/when Carpool Well development can resume.

			2015			2016					
Activity/Sub-Activity		Responsible Party	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June
	Identify if there are any priority usability improvements that can be rolled out quickly.	Jumana/ Lauren									
	Explore App Partners capabilities and upcoming updates for opportunities. (trip diary and RMS)	Jumana									
	Draft press release about new functionality (Phase 2)	Jumana/ Kit									
	Include new technology improvements in promotional materials and marketing (Phase 2)	Jumana/ Kit/ Rachel									
Carpool Well (Web and App) ²											
	Develop requirements/functionality; Coordinate with Partners, develop priorities, data needs, evaluation metrics, login requirements, etc.	Jumana/ Jon/ Helise									
	Explore potential partnerships with popular trip planners such as GoogleMaps/ Waze re: incorporating Carpool Well API (Begin developing partnership early on in order to ensure that functionality meets their requirements)	Jumana/ Barbara									
	Develop pros and cons; Decide on platform option (use ToEverywhere.net, existing prototype, develop new platform)	Jumana/ Barbara									
	Develop sketch layout	Jumana/ Jon									
	Send out to CRG for design										
	Get cost estimates										
	Implement										
	Test										
	Release										

² See footnote above regarding schedule delay on Carpool Well development

[illegible]

Phase 3 – Make Decision Regarding Full Transition Strategy and Implement: Once Carpool Well is operational and the PPAs have been actively promoted, activity will be monitored to identify whether one or more of the apps is gaining enough traction to justify turning the RMS off, or maintaining limited operation of it.



Carpool Well³ and the new trip diary are planned for release in 2016.

Trip Diary: Once the new trip diary is released, new registrants will not be able to enter the old trip diary, but be forwarded to the new one. Current users will be transferred over, with their data to the new diary. Once this process is complete, the old trip diary will no longer be available for use and will be turned off.

Carpool Well: Carpool Well will be investigated as a way to provide aggregated carpool matches from App Partners as well as from 511 Rideshare’s RMS. It would operate independently of the RMS, allowing it to function regardless of the decision to maintain or shut down the RMS.

RMS: Once Carpool Well has been operating and promoted for several months, the team will decide whether or not to maintain the RMS as one of the inputs to Carpool Well. Regardless of whether the RMS is maintained in whole or in part, or is shut down, Carpool Well will likely continue operation.

³ See footnote above regarding delayed schedule for Carpool Well development.

FACTORS TO CONSIDER BEFORE RELYING SOLELY ON PRIVATE-SECTOR CARPOOL MATCHING APPS

The following considerations will be incorporated into the decision-making criteria:

- Does one or more of the private partners show a long-term commitment to stay in the carpool matching marketplace?
- Has one or more of the private partners gained a “critical mass” in terms of app downloads, registrations, and actual carpool trips taken to provide a viable ridesharing option for the Bay Area?
 - The collective total of carpool matching app downloads over a one year period is XX,000.
 - The collective total of carpool trips taken via carpool matching app reaches 100,000 to 150,000⁴ for at least three consecutive months
- Will there be significant gaps in service, geographically or functionally, if the RMS is turned off?
 - Private sector apps are used by commuters in all nine Bay Area counties (the same app does not ubiquitous use throughout the Bay Area).
 - % of rideshare customers without smart phones
- Is the RMS technology still relevant in the marketplace?
 - RMS new registration numbers are have not decreased significantly despite the availability of private partner apps.
- Does MTC have the funding/interest in continuing to operate the RMS?

If continuing to operate RMS:

- Identify how RMS fits into overall ride match marketplace and whether it should be maintained as a whole or only portions of its functionality.
- Re-evaluate partnerships strategy and if and how it still makes sense.
- Develop implementation plan for how RMS and Carpool Well are maintained and marketed.

If shutting down the RMS:

- Turn off RMS matches, so any customers searching in the RMS find only private partner matches

⁴ Similar to average monthly vehicle trip reduced due to current rideshare program ridematching activities.